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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to determine the association among variables representing parent and school demographics, parents' opinions of the school, their reasons for choosing it, and their willingness to support the school in various ways, including the level of tuition they would pay. Data were collected from a stratified sample of 10 high schools in the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio. Most of the 1,843 parents who responded were white, with an average family income of $40,000. Structural equation modeling was used to test theoretical models assessing the relationships among the variables. Findings show that parents' choosing the schools for religious or values-related reasons predicts neither their financial support for the school nor their engagement in volunteer activities in them. Findings do suggest the importance of parent views of school quality and parent characteristics, of which family income was the greatest contributor to predicting school financial support. These results add to the body of financial research on Catholic schools by documenting a customer satisfaction relationship between the schools and their clients. Appendixes contain a correlation matrix, and the variables from the parent questionnaire. (Contains 4 tables, 2 figures, and 22 references.) (SLD)

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Contributions of Parents' School Opinions and Reasons for Choice to Their Willingness to Support Catholic High Schools: A Structural Model

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Contributions of Parents' School Opinions and Reasons for Choice To Their Willingness to Support Catholic High Schools: A Structural Model

As the cost of tuition in Catholic schools continues to escalate, these schools are becoming less affordable to middle and low-income families (Baker and Riordan, 1998). Historically, Catholic schools served immigrant families opposed to the non-denominational Protestant character of public schools (Carper, 1998). The growth and success of Catholic schools was phenomenal. Catholic school enrollment peaked in 1965 with over 6 million students enrolled (NCEA, 1996). The decline of Protestant symbolism and anti-Catholic sentiment in public schools, precipitated by the 1962 Supreme Court case which removed prayer and Bible reading from the public schools, made them acceptable to the upwardly mobile Catholic population. With the election in 1960 of the first Catholic president, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Catholics were beginning to take their places of influence in American society.

The success of the parish-based Catholic school, borne on the backs of an immigrant church, suddenly was no longer the major keeper of the faith. As Catholic families flocked to public schools, Catholic school enrollment declined by half over the next 15 years beginning in 1965, though increasing numbers of non-Catholic families began using them for various reasons. Many of these reasons are related to the perceived lack of academic rigor, discipline, and ironically, the absence of the values of Protestant Christianity previously taught in public schools. In addition, Catholic schools continue to struggle to maintain their religious character as the workforce in them changed dramatically from women religious earning a subsistence wage, most of whom were also

immigrants, to Catholic laity whose salaries, compared to those in public schools, are frequently referred to as unjust. The continuation of the religious mission of Catholic schools, the need to fill seats, the commitment to serve middle and low-income families, the rising cost of maintaining these schools, and the need to attend to "customer satisfaction," place Catholic schools in an ambiguous and tenuous situation which threatens their very survival.

The historical experience of Catholic school choice and the perceived academic success of these schools, particularly with minority and low-income families (Greeley, 1982), is of interest to policy makers as all levels of government consider and continue to adopt market-oriented approaches to educational reform. There is renewed interest in the attitudes and satisfaction of parents toward the "enterprise" of schooling. What is it that parents' want from schools? How do parents' perceive a particular school, in this case a Catholic high school, and what is it about the school that shapes their opinions of it?

We argue that the ability of schools of choice, especially Catholic schools, to attract and retain students is dependent largely on parents' perceptions of what they are getting when they choose the school and the amount of tuition parents are willing to pay for a child to attend a Catholic school. Moreover, how a school represents itself to the public, or is viewed by the public, influences parental choice. In addition, it is likely that when parents are required to pay tuition and make other kinds of donations of funds and time to a school, their willingness to do so is based, in part, on both their opinions of the school and their reasons for choosing it. Finally, it has been well documented that school demographics, (e.g., size, geographic location) (Bauch & Goldring, 1995; Goldring &

Shapira, 1993; Wells & Wells, 1993) play a role in parents' reasons for choosing a school and, therefore, are likely to impact their willingness to support it.

Study Purpose

While a number of studies (e.g., Cooper, 1994; NCEA, 1998; Vitullo-Martin, 1979) have been conducted on the financial aspects of Catholic schools, few have examined indicators of parent willingness to pay school tuition and contribute other means of support to the school.[1] Data for this study were collected from a stratified random sample of 10 Catholic High Schools in the Diocese of Cleveland. The purpose of this study is to determine the association among variables representing parent and school demographics, parents' opinions of the school, their reasons for choosing it, and their willingness to support the school in various ways, including the level of tuition they would pay.

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

One way to frame the question of what parents are willing to do economically for a school is to view parents as clients or customers of the school and apply Hirschman's (1970) explication of exit, voice, and loyalty. His model of client-organization relations identifies three factors relevant to schools: parents' satisfaction with their children's schools, the values parents place on educational quality, and the degree to which parents express voice. When clients are dissatisfied, exit is likely to occur; however, clients often have the opportunity to voice their complaints in order to improve the quality of the product or service and thus stave off the need to exit. The balance between exit and voice is mediated by loyalty in that clients loyal to an organization are likely to opt for voice, even when exit is available. In opting for voice, parents also might be willing to invest

their resources in boosting educational quality. Archbald (1988) argues that parents who choose their children's' schools are more satisfied with it, and that the exercise of choice in itself commits parents more fully to the school. In Catholic and other private schools, parents pay tuition that extracts an additional commitment and loyalty, and in many cases, these schools require parents to volunteer or perform other services for the school. This study hypothesized that, based on notions of choice, school "loyalty" and satisfaction, variables such as parents' prior experiences with Catholic schools (e.g., attended a Catholic school), and choosing these schools for religious or values reasons would be positively associated with parents' willingness to support the school in various ways.

Another way to frame our question of parent willingness to support the school is to consider Kahneman and Tversky's (1972, 1979) theory which argues that when customers face uncertainty in making a choice, they appeal to the extent to which a product or service is more representative of what they want than another. While choice is partly influenced by the personal characteristics of the decision maker, it is influenced also by the extent to which the school "markets" or represents parents' understanding of a good school: its "effectiveness" in where it places and achieves its priorities, the "atmosphere" of the school regarding parent involvement and teacher caring, and parents' satisfaction with these qualities, among other things. This representation often shapes the opinions parents have as projected by the school and those close to the school. While representation may not convey factual evidence, nevertheless, it forms clients' opinions, much as advertising does. And, much as advertising does, parents' willingness to pay tuition, and make other sacrifices of money, time, and service in support of the school, is

influenced by the educational quality and other benefits of a school parents think they are receiving. Thus, this study further hypothesized that parents' opinions about school quality such as the effectiveness of school programs and policies, the school's commitment to parent involvement, and the presence of teacher caring would be positively associated with their willingness to support the school.

In sum, this study sought to examine the empirical plausibility of a theoretical model linking parents' reasons for choosing a Catholic school and their opinions or views of school quality to their willingness to pay increasingly higher amounts of school tuition and to support the school in other ways such as donating time to the school and serving on school committees. It may be that parents who choose Catholic schools today are less willing to support them based on a traditional communitarian model that emphasizes religious values, school loyalty, and volunteerism (e.g., Coleman and Hoffer, 1987). Rather, other factors may be more important than those typically associated with religious, particularly Catholic schools.

Research Questions

Specifically, this study asks the following questions: 1) What are parents' reasons for choosing a Catholic High School in the Cleveland Diocese? 2) How do parent and school demographics impact parents' most important reason for choosing a particular school? 3) Is parents' most important reason (i.e., religious/values, curriculum, physical/social setting reason) for choosing a school related to their views or opinions of the quality or health of the school? 4) Which one (i.e., reasons for choice, opinions about the school, parent and school demographics) is the strongest one associated with parents' willingness to support Cleveland Catholic High Schools?

Method

Participants

The participants are 1,843 parents whose children were attending a Catholic high school in the diocese of Cleveland , Ohio during the1990-1991 academic year. Parents are primarily white (N=1,594), with an approximate average family income of $40,000. The incidence of one or both parents having attended a Catholic school is very high. In less than 20% of families, neither parent attended a Catholic school, while over 60% of families had at least one parent who attended both elementary and secondary Catholic schools. Parents have high expectations for their children's receiving a college degree. Only 17.5% of parents do not expect their child to receive a college degree and 26.6% expect their child to receive an advanced college degree.

The schools in this study were chosen from a stratified random sample of the Diocese of Cleveland's, at that time, 25 secondary schools, both religious and diocesan owned. The schools were stratified in order to obtain a mix of schools based on urbanicity (suburban/small town, urban, inner city), size, and governance or ownership. Of the ten schools in the sample, four are owned by religious orders; three are inner city schools with the remainder spread about evenly between suburban/small town and urban locations. School enrollments range from a low of 283 to a high of 1242. Table 1 displays parent and school demographics. Since parents is the unit of analysis in this study, school demographics in this table are presented as the proportion of parents whose children attend schools with these characteristics.[2]

Procedures

The data for this study were gathered in close collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Cleveland. High school principals and diocesan officials revised and made suggests for improvement. A letter describing the purpose of the research and the parent surveys were distributed to students and collected from them by their homeroom teachers. For parent survey participation, return rates at each school were fairly high, ranging from 33% to 87%. Only two schools had low return rates of below 50% respectively.

Measures

The Parent Survey was designed to assess parents' perceptions in broad areas such as: reasons for choosing a Catholic school, opinions about the school (e.g., school standards, priorities, effectiveness, teaching, parent involvement), and parents' willingness to support the school in various ways (e.g., amount of tuition, paying tuition based on income, volunteering time to the school, contributing to scholarship funds). Three sets of parent perception scales were developed for this study: Reasons for Choosing the School, Opinions of School Health/Effectiveness, and Willingness to Support the School. These were derived from factor analysis. Two additional sets of variables, parent and school demographics, were also generated for this study. Though briefly described below, all items included in the subscales can be found in Appendix B.

Reasons for Choosing the School. The initial list of "reasons" was comprised of 15 items for which parents were asked to circle the extent of their agreement on a 4-point Likert-type scale ranging from a low of 1 (*not at all important*) to a high of 4 (*very important*). Principal component factor analysis resulted in the retention of 14 items

comprising three subscales: Religious/ Values Reasons, Curriculum/Academic Reasons, and Physical/Social Setting Reasons. These latter reasons contain items representing school safety, location, transportation, social contacts, and the gender and racial composition of the school. Factor loadings for items in these scales, and the result of reliability testing (Alpha coefficients) are reported in Appendix B.

Parents' *most important reason for choosing the school* was determined by asking parents to choose a single reason from the list of 15. These responses were categorized to correspond to the reasons categories previously defined: Values, Curriculum Physical/Social Setting. Thus, for example, if parents chose a "values" reason, or a "curriculum" reason as their most important reason for choosing the school, it was noted as such.

School Health Opinions. Again, based on factor analysis, three subsets of compound variables and a single item measuring parents' opinions about School Health emerged: School Effectiveness, Parent Involvement, Teacher Caring, and Rating of the School. The latter is a single item in which parents were asked to rate the school by assigning it a letter grade from F (*failure*) through A (*excellent*).

School Support. Four single items measure this construct. Parents were asked to indicate their willingness to pay tuition at increasing levels of support, to pay tuition based on income, to donate time to the school, and to work on committees.

Parent and School Demographics. Finally, parent characteristics include family income, ethnicity, education, parents' Catholic school attendance, and the expectations parents have for their children's level of educational attainment. A 3-point scale was used to measure parents' Catholic school experiences: neither parent had Catholic school

experiences, either one or the other parent had some Catholic school experience, and either one or the other parent attended both elementary and secondary Catholic schools. School characteristics include enrollment size and extent of urbanicity. Urbanicity is defined as the school's remoteness to the inner city. Thus, a rural or suburban school location would be considered low on an urbanicity scale, which a school that designates itself as urban or inner city would be considered high on the scale

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for parent and school demographic variables. (These were described earlier, above.) The data presented in Table 2 address the first research question, which asks about parents' reasons for choosing a Catholic high school. As shown in the table, over 60% of parents indicated that all three types of reasons—Values, Curriculum, and Physical/Social Setting—were either *somewhat important* or *very important*. While parents placed greater importance on values and curriculum reasons for choosing a school than on physical/social setting reasons, nonetheless, these latter reasons are also important to parents in choosing Catholic schools. When parents were asked to isolate a single reason for choosing a Catholic school, however, only 14.4% chose a physical/social setting reason. Obviously, for some types of parents, these latter reasons are a highly motivating factor in choosing a Catholic school.

Table 3 displays data that addresses the second research question which asks how parent and school demographic characteristics are associated with parents' reasons for choosing a Catholic high school. It is here where we can see that there is a particular

group of parents for whom physical/social setting reasons for choosing are very important. Minority parents with lower levels of education, income, Catholic school experience, and academic expectations for their children are more likely than their counterparts to choose these Catholic schools for physical/social setting reasons. Differences between these two groups of parents across all categories of reasons were significant at the .05 level. Similarly, parents whose children were enrolled in inner city schools were more likely to choose them for physical/social setting reasons than their counterparts in suburban and rural schools ($p<.001$). It is quite possible that this group of parents represents a type of "newcomer" to Catholic schools who is seeking, at considerable financial cost, an alternative to the city public school system, which they consider unsafe, or as otherwise not providing a desirable learning environment for their children.

The data in Table 4 addresses the third research question concerning the relationship between parents' reasons for choosing a Catholic high school and their opinions about the school's quality, health, effectiveness, or other characteristics of a "good" school. Again, the greatest differences appear to be between those who choose the school for physical/social setting reasons and those who choose for either a values or curriculum reason. This former set of parents are less likely than those who choose the school for a values or curriculum reason, to believe that the school is effective, promotes parent involvement, and has caring teachers. Similarly, they are more likely to rate their school lower than those who choose the school for values and curriculum reasons. It is interesting to note, however, that all parents in the study rate their schools well, 4.19 on a 5-point scale. Parents who choose for physical/social setting reasons appear to be

concerned primarily with their children's safety, convenience, and the kinds of other students with whom their child will associate who attend the school.

A pattern that emerges here seems to indicate a strong association between parents' opinions about the school among parents who choose them for values or curriculum reasons. These parents are concerned primarily with the school's academic quality, standards, the preparation they are receiving for further schooling or for the workplace, and the teacher caring and attention they perceive their children will receive at these schools. These parents tend to be white, have high incomes and expectations for their children's academic levels of attainment, and tend to choose schools that are less urban.

Description and Evaluation of Models

The main interest in this study is to examine the intercorrelations among the measures and to describe a model that best predicts those measures that impact parents' willingness to support Catholic schools.

We used structural equation modeling (LISREL.VIII; Schumacker and Lomax, 1996) to test the theoretical models assessing the relationships among reasons, opinions, school support, and parent and school demographic variables. The models contain paths, in the form of arrows, from the latent independent variables to the latent dependent variables, or path diagrams. The models graphically present the hypothesized pattern of theoretical relations among a set of variables. Additionally, path coefficients are used to indicate the direct effect of a variable hypothesized as a cause of an effect variable (p.44). We used chi-square and goodness of fit indices to arrive at the "best" model.

Figure 1 presents the standardized solution for the structural equation model specifying parents' school health opinions, and parent and school demographics as direct determinants of the importance of parents' three types of reasons for choosing the school. The first step in evaluating the model was to assess the fit between the hypothesized model and the data. The goodness-of-fit index (GFI), which is interpreted similarly to a correlation coefficient in terms of desirable values, is considered a reasonable statistic for this purpose because the chi-square statistic is easily distorted by large sample sizes (Fassinger, 1987), such as in this study. The adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) is the goodness-of-fit index adjusted for degrees of freedom and the root mean square residual (RMSR) is the average of the mean square of the residuals. Evaluative standards for interpretation of the GFI, AGFI, and RMSR are not empirically determined because statistical distributions and hence probability values for these indexes are unknown. GFI values above.90 and AGFI values above .80, however, are often cited as criteria for acceptable fit (e.g., Kenny, Milanen, Lomax, & Brabeck, 1993; Long, Kahn, & Schutz, 1992; Quintana & Lapsley, 1987; Schumacker & Lomax, 1996). Low values for the RMSR are desirable. The GFI and AGFI indexes, presented in Figure 1, suggest that the model provides a reasonable fit to the data, although the overall chi-square is significant (171.80). However, an uncertainty always persists because other models may also fit the data.

The second step in evaluating the model was to observe the relationship between each construct and its indicators. The standardized coefficients representing factor loadings between the indicators and the constructs are presented in Figure 1 and show that each indicator has a positive and statistically significant ($p<.05$) loading for the

relevant constructs with the exception of school demographics. The indicator variables for reasons share similar loadings (.30 to .37). Likewise, the indicator variables for opinions show that teacher caring (.39) and rating of the school (.47) have higher loadings than school effectiveness (.34) and parent involvement (.27), though all are significant.

Support for the model was also assessed by examining the standardized path coefficients (analogous to standardized beta weights in multiple regression) along the paths that connect the constructs. The pathways linking parent opinions and parent demographics with reasons for choosing the school range from .23 to .62 and are statistically significant. The path from school demographics to reasons is not statistically significant. Parent opinions is the best predictor of reasons for choosing the school (.45).

The final step in evaluating the model was to examine the total amount of variance in each criterion variable that was explained by the predictor variables (parent opinions and parent and school demographics). This was assessed by observing the values for zeta (amount of variance not explained) and 1-zeta (amount of variance explained). Parent opinions and parent and school demographics together explained 21% of the variance in parents' reasons.

In Figure 2, our interest is in testing how the variables measuring support for the school "fit" into the model, and to compare the associations of opinions and reasons with support. Thus, we first tested the paths indicating the relationships among the variables used to define support, as well as the direct paths between opinions, reasons, and support.

The GFI and AGFI, as indicated in Figure 2, suggest an unacceptable fit between hypothesized Model 2 and the data. Regarding support, only two paths were statistically

significant. There is a positively significant relationship between support and the level of tuition parents were willing to pay, but a negatively significant relationship between support and parents' willingness to pay tuition based on their family's income. The pathway between opinions and support was statistically significant while the pathway between reasons and support was not. This indicates that parent opinions of the school are significantly associated with their willingness to financially support it while their reasons for choosing the school are not. Thus, parents' opinions of the school are the best predictors of both their reasons for choosing it and their willingness to support it.

Since not all the pathways between support and its defining variables were significant in Model 2, we decided, in efforts to achieve a more parsimonious solution, to evaluate a third model (Figure 3). This third model eliminated donating time to the school and willingness to work on a school committee as ways of supporting the school because they were not significant. It assessed only financial types of support with reasons, opinions, and parent and school demographics. We retained reasons in this model because of our interest in determining if reasons was a mediating variable in parents' willingness to financially support the school. As in Model 1, the GFI and AGFI indicate an acceptable fit and the indicators meet the statistical criteria as measures of the constructs. Furthermore, statistical tests show that 69% of the variance in determining factors that contribute to parents' willingness to pay tuition can be attributed collectively to *opinions, reasons, and parent and school demographics*. The results indicate, however, that there is little mediating effect of reasons on parents' willingness to financially support the school. This is also the case for school demographics in predicting its impact on reasons and financial support.

In comparing Models 1 and 3, parent opinions retains its association with reasons (.45), but less so for financial support (.14) though it is significantly associated. School demographics has little correlation with either reasons or support. Surprisingly, though not unexpected, the loading for family income in defining parent demographics increased from .53 in Model 1 when examining reasons only to .73 when support was added to Model 3. In Model 3, compared to opinion (.14), parent demographics are defined primarily by income has a considerably stronger relationship (.82) to support than opinion. In the last analysis, parent income is the most powerful predictor of parents' willingness to pay higher levels of tuition. Interestingly, these same parents are not willing to pay tuition based on a sliding tuition scale, which would consider their family income level in determining tuition charges. Either parents do not wish to disclose their income or, perhaps, they fear that such a system of payment might be unfair. They prefer to see all parents pay the same level of income, although higher income parents are willing to pay higher levels of tuition. This result suggests the need for further investigation.

DISCUSSION

The findings of a reasonable fit for Model 3 disconfirms our initial hypothesis that choosing Catholic schools for religious or values reasons, and parents' prior experiences with Catholic schools would be positively associated with parents' willingness to support the school. The more traditional, communitarian values of Catholic schools such as parents' choosing them for religious or values reasons, or for any reasons for that matter, predicts neither their willingness to increase their financial support for the school nor engage in volunteer work in them.

Model 3 findings also suggest, but cannot confirm our hypothesis that parent opinions about school quality are positively associated with their willingness to support the school. Indeed, our findings not only suggest the importance of parent views of school quality, but also the importance of parent characteristics in financially supporting these schools. As was noted, family income is the greatest contributor to parent demographics and thus to school financial support.

Our results add to the growing body of financial research on Catholic schools by documenting a "customer satisfaction" relationship between these schools and their clients based on parents' views of school quality and their willingness to pay increasingly higher rates of tuition to support them. These Catholic schools appear to be in an era in which Catholic schools have more of an external, functionalist value to parents than an internal, relational value.

These conclusions raise further questions about the viability of Catholic schools to continue to support themselves based on parent tuition unless they can attract middle and upper income parents. Catholic schools have always prided themselves on serving the poor. While most Catholic schools admit poorer students at lower tuition rates, the influx of upwardly mobile and upper middle class parents is needed for Catholic school survival, unless of course states adopt voucher plans, which could stave off the exiting of poor families. This question, of course, opens a whole other debate!

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[1] We wish to acknowledge related work currently completed by Thomas E. Garvey (2000), Case Western University, regarding the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Cleveland. His qualitative dissertation probes parental choice issues and their implications for diocesan financial policies.

[2] The data used in this study are from a large, extensive study of Cleveland Catholic High Schools and their feeder schools in which data were sought to determine parents' views of their schools, their reasons for choosing them, and their willingness to support them. Data were gathered from not only parents, but also from students, teachers, and administrators. Survey as well as observational, documentary, and interview data are included in the larger study.

Table 1
Parent and School Demographics

	N	%
Parent Demographics		
Education Level		
< College degree	1,081	62.0
College degree	495	26.3
Advanced degree	204	11.7
Ethnicity		
Minority	207	11.5
White	1,594	88.5
Catholic School Experience		
None	275	19.7
Some	262	18.8
All	859	61.5
Academic Expectations		
< College degree	405	17.5
College degree	911	50.8
Advanced degree	476	26.6
Family Income		
<35,000	698	41.4
35,000- 49,999	450	26.7
50,000 +	536	31.8
School Demographics		
Urbanity of School		
Suburban/Small Town	716	38.8
Urban	842	45.7
Inner City	285	15.5
School Size		
Small=<400	445	24.1
Medium=401~699	412	22.4
Large=>701	986	53.5

Note: Total number of parents responding to the survey was 1843. Category totals that do not equal 1843 are due to missing data for those items.

Table 2

Frequency of Parents' Reasons for School Choice: Importance and Most Important Reason

Reasons for School Choice	N	%
Values		
Not at all important	2	.1
Not important	35	2.0
Somewhat important	563	32.2
Very important	1,148	65.7
Curriculum		
Not at all important	3	.2
Not important	43	2.4
Somewhat important	654	37.1
Very important	1,062	60.3
Physical/Social Setting		
Not at all important	6	.4
Not important	141	8.3
Somewhat important	1,148	68.1
Very important	395	23.2
Most Important Reason for School Choice		
Values	670	42.2
Curriculum	687	43.3
Physical/Social Setting	229	14.4

Note: Total number of parents responding to the survey was 1843. Frequency reported for nonmissing cases.

Table 3

Parent and School Demographic Characteristics by Most Important Reason for Choosing the School

	Values		Curriculum		Physical/Social Setting		Totals	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Parent Demographics								
Education Level	1.54	.71	1.54	.70	1.36	.64	1.51*	.70
Ethnicity	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	
Minority	35	23.3	73	48.7	42	28.0	150	
White	628	44.3	605	42.7	185	13.0	1,418	
Pearson Chi-Square							.000*	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Catholic School Experience	2.54	.74	2.36	.82	2.22	.88	2.43**	.80
Academic Expectations	1.99	.69	2.16	.67	1.88	.76	2.05**	.70
Family Income	1.98	.84	1.95	.88	1.56	.76	1.91**	.85
School Demographics								
Urbanicity	1.64	.65	1.72	.64	2.09	.81	1.74**	.69
Size	2.42	.77	2.30	.84	2.03	.84	2.31**	.82

* P<.05

** P<.001

Table 4

Parents' Opinions of School by Their Most Important Reason for Choosing It (Means)

	Values N=670		Curriculum N=687		Physical/Social Setting N=229		Totals N=1586	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Opinions								
School Effectiveness	3.24	.39	3.25	.39	3.07	.40	3.22*	.40
Parental Involvement	2.80	.43	2.74	.47	2.62	.57	2.75*	.47
Teacher Caring	3.16	.46	3.13	.48	3.00	.55	3.12*	.48
Rating of School	4.26	.66	4.23	.69	3.90	.75	4.19*	.70

* $p<.001$

Note: Total number of parents responding to the survey was 1843. Means, standard deviations, numbers, and percentages reported for nonmissing cases.

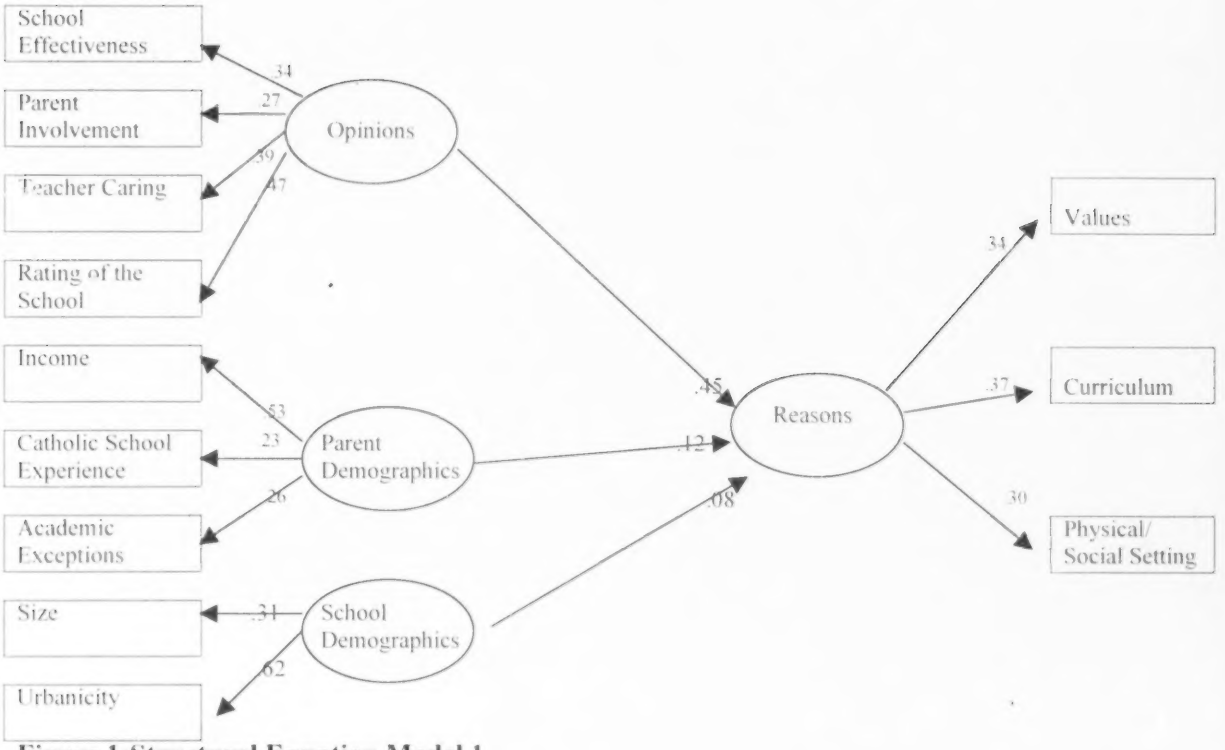

Figure 1:Structural Equation Model 1

NOTE: All Factor loadings are significant ($p<.05$) and all paths significant ($p<.05$) except for the path from School Demographics to Reasons. X^2 (28df) = 171.80; GFI = .98; AGFI = .96; RMSR = .015.

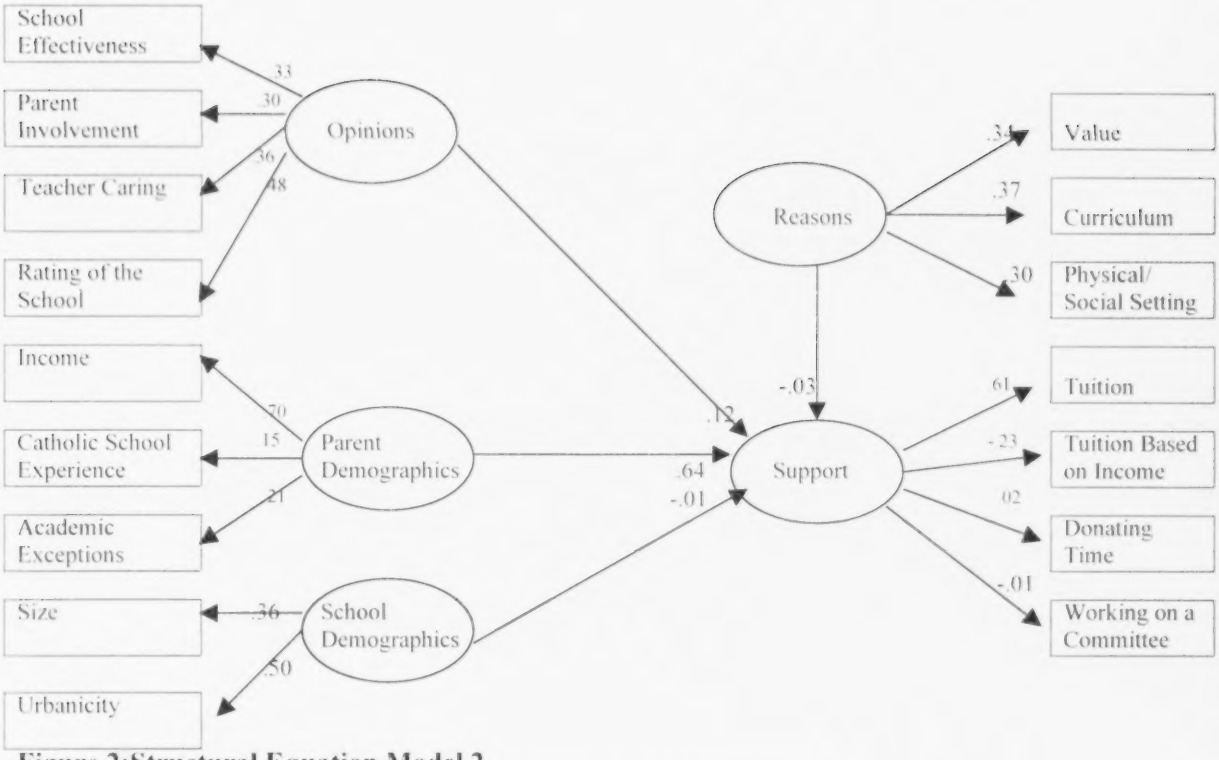

Figure 2:Structural Equation Model 2

NOTE: All Factor loadings are significant ($p<.05$) except for the loadings of Donating Time and Working on a Committee; all paths are significant ($p<.05$) except for the paths from Reasons and School Demographics to Support. X^2 (98df) = 1555.05; GFI = .90; AGFI = .86; RMSR = .036.

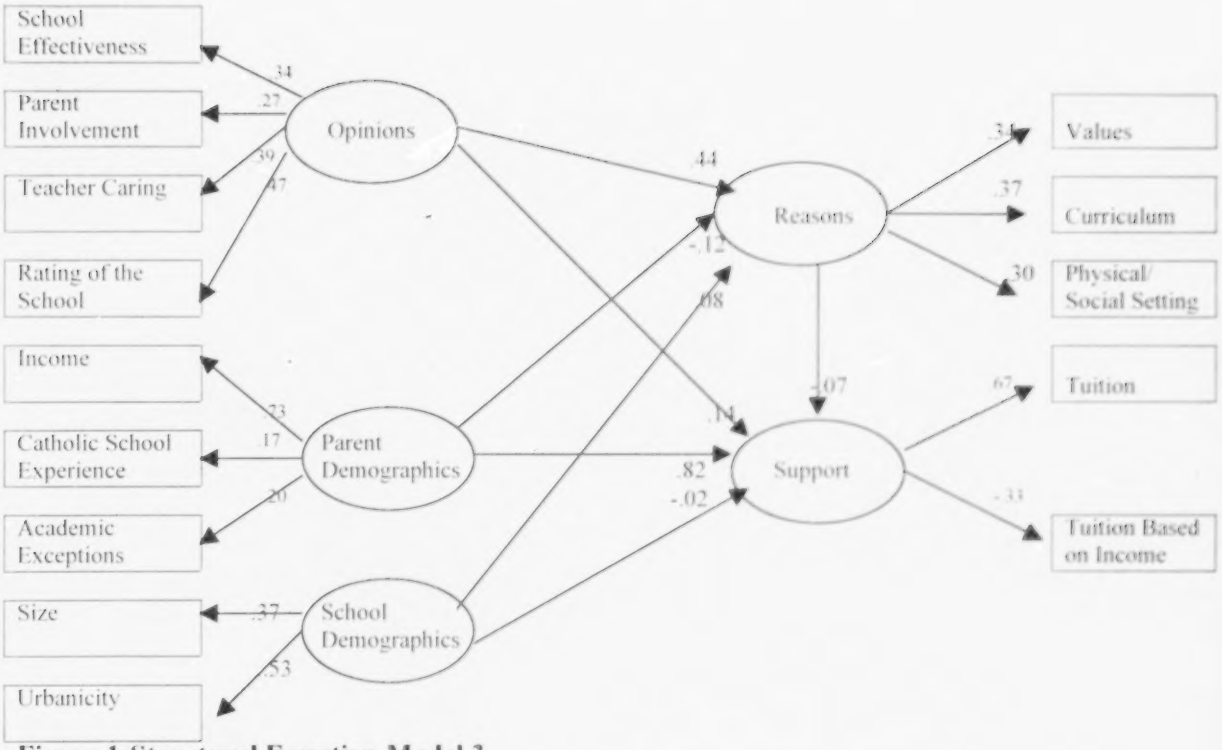

Figure 1:Structural Equation Model 3

NOTE: All Factor loadings are significant ($p<.05$) and all paths significant ($p<.05$) except for the paths from School Demographics to Reasons and to Support and the paths from Reasons to Support . X^2 (45df) = 203.62; GFI = .98; AGFI = .96; RMSR = .016.

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Appendix A
Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 School Effectiveness	-----																	
2 Parent Involvement	412**	----																
3 Teacher Caring	647**	439**	----															
4 Rating Of School	544**	410**	489**	----														
5 Values	317**	360**	316**	109**	----													
6 Curriculum	299**	230**	247**	220**	601**	----												
7 Physical social Setting	159**	117**	101**	072**	434**	534**	----											
8 Most Important Reason	-098**	-124**	-095**	-141**	-293**	-039**	062*	-----										
9 Tuition	084**	044	120**	116**	025	002	-085**	-054	-----									
10 Tuition Based on Income	003	007	-011	091	046	060*	060*	042	-263**	-----								
11 Donate time	152**	093**	157**	118**	231**	163**	068	-121**	012	096**	-----							
12 Work on a Committee	100**	084**	173**	096**	176**	150**	101**	-068**	-036	099**	569**	-----						
13 Education Level	008	016	043	042	-028	-044	-133**	068**	216**	-146**	078**	077**	-----					
14 Parent Ethnicity	060*	043	059*	110**	126**	029	-130**	-151**	074**	-036	048*	-018	080**	-----				
15 Family Income	008	017	039	029	009	-053*	-141**	-129**	408**	-332**	055*	024	403**	142**	-----			
16 Catholic School Experience	-039	021	035	066*	134**	041	-028	-147**	060*	-054	115**	071*	189**	235**	173**	-----		
17 Academic Expectations	142**	011	132**	124**	007	069*	-071**	003	151**	-066**	068**	070**	276**	013	240**	083**	-----	
18 School Size	013	019	024	107**	103**	-004	-029	-153**	149**	-063**	-080**	-064**	044	261**	151**	098**	084**	-----
19 Urbanicity of School	-095**	-019	-039	-192**	-123**	-055*	046	189**	-142**	053*	-065**	005	-118**	-286**	-232**	-171**	-136**	-333**

*P<.05
**P<.001

Appendix B

Variables:

A. REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE SCHOOL

1. Values

- Good discipline (Not at all important, Not important, Somewhat important, Very important)
- Religious education/character development
- School shares my values and beliefs
- Traditions the school has

Alpha = .6731, Factor loading .593~ .822

2. Curriculum

- Good academic programs
- Preparation for careers/jobs
- Special programs such as the arts, music, math, science, business
- Athletic programs/Sports and other

Alpha = .6510, Factor loading .654~ .765

3. Physical/Social Setting

- Safe school location
- Social contacts students can make
- Availability of transportation
- Affordable tuition
- Gender composition of the student body
- Racial composition of the student body

Alpha = .6869, Factor loading .580~.673

4. Most Important Reason for Choosing School (Values, Curriculum, Physical/Social Setting)

B. SCHOOL HEALTH OPINIONS

1. School Effectiveness

- School places high priority learning (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree)
- The homework assigned is worthwhile
- My child challenged academically at school
- My child working hard at school
- The standards set by school are realistic
- The standards set by school are enforced
- School preparing students well for college
- School preparing students well for workplace
- The school is a safe place

Alpha = .8682, Factor loading .584~ .771

2. Parent Involvement

- Parents have an adequate say setting school policy
- Parents work together supporting school policy
- School provides opportunities for parent involvement

Alpha = .6604, Factor loading .713~ .829

3. Teacher Caring

- My child enjoys school
- My child is cared about as an individual
- Teachers really care about students
- Teachers really care about parents

Alpha = .7645, Factor loading .698~ .793

4. Rating of the School (Fail, C, B, A)

C. SCHOOL SUPPORT

1. Amount of tuition parents are willing to pay (0-$1,000, 1,001-1,500, 1,501-2,000, 2,001-3,000, 3,001+)
2. Pay tuition based on income (Not willing, Somewhat willing, Most willing)
3. Donate time to school
4. Work on a committee

D. PARENT DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Education Level (High school or less/ Vocational/ some college, college degree, advanced degree)
2. Ethnicity (White, Minority)
3. Family Income (<35,000, 35,000-49,999, 50,000+)
4. Catholic School Experience (None, Some, All)
5. Academic Expectation (High school or less/ Vocational/ some college, college degree, advanced degree)

E. SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Urbanicity of School (Suburban/small town, Urban, Inner city)
2. School Size (Small = less than 400, Medium=401~ 700, Large => 700)